

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

YOU WILL BE HATED | RED LETTER TALKS

RYAN BRAMLETT | MARCH 10, 2024

Traders Point, welcome. How are we doing? Good. Hey, good to be with you today—everyone at the campuses and everyone watching online, welcome.

Before we get rolling, can we just take a moment to show some honor and appreciation for that hour that we lost this morning, huh? You didn't know how big of a deal that little hour was until you woke up. Some would say you were sleeping on it. But, excited to be with you guys today.

We're continuing in our message series Red Letter Talks. And here's what we've been doing. We've been opening up our Bibles and looking at these red letters. And really you see them in two big places, in the gospels, or the biographies of Jesus' life, and then at the very end in the book of Revelation.

The red letters mean that Jesus is speaking. And what we've been looking at is these letters. These words are incredible. They talk about all kinds of things. There are some that kind of lead to this life of fulfillment and what it looks like for us to flourish as humans. And then there are some other red letters that have these stories or parables that tell us what God is like and what He thinks about me and you.

The red letters are so profound and so wise that they lead us to believe that these aren't the words of a man; these are the very words of God. These red letters are a reminder that God has chosen to write Himself into our story. God became man.

And what we've been doing in this series is grabbing a few chapters in the book of John and looking at the red letters of Jesus. So, if you have your Bible you can either flip open to John, chapter 15, starting in verse 18 or you can use an app as well.

To give you a little bit of context as to what's happening here at the end of John, Jesus is about to be crucified. He's about to be murdered and He knows it. So, He's taking this time and it's kind of like a farewell discourse. He's telling His friends and His closest followers all of the things that He wants to make sure that they have before He goes.

He's inaugurating this new kingdom and what's about to happen. And He wants to make sure that they are prepared. So, this is where we pick up in John, chapter 15, verse 18. These are the words of Jesus. He says:



“If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.” John 15:18-19 (NLT)

Welcome to church.

Pastor Aaron always gives me the best weekends. You know it? He spoils me. He really does. But that is a pretty good summary of what the next few verses are going to look like. And the title for today’s message is actually You Will Be Hated.

There is no way around it. He’s going to say that. He’s going to use repetition to make sure that we don’t leave here without knowing this.

And here’s the idea behind it. He’s saying, “Hey, because you are attaching yourselves to Me, you will be hated. You can try to live a good and moral life, you can try not to offend people, and there is room for that. But at the end of the day I want you to know that as you go, you will be hated.”

This would have been very surprising for them. Because you’ve got to think that they are thinking, “This is our Messiah. This is our Savior. This is our leader. Any day now He’s about to roll into Rome and take over.” Right?

So when He sits down and says, “Hey, I want you to know that when I go you’re going to be hated,” they are probably like, “Who’s going to be left to hate us, Jesus? Because after you wipe everyone out... Am I right?” And Jesus is like, “Who told you that? Are you talking to Peter again? Did Peter say that?”

The way that He was going to be victorious is going to look very, very different. So, He wants them to be sure of this. He doesn’t want them to be surprised or caught off guard.

You will be hated.

And then He gives us why we are going to be hated. Look at this in verse 19. We just read it.

“The world would love you as one of its own if you,” say it with me, “belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. John 15:18-19 (NLT)

Yeah, okay. It’s going to be a good time if we’re already clapping. I like it. Hold on to that energy.

He says, “You would be loved and accepted by the world, but I’ve called you out of the world and now you no longer belong to it.”

You ever find yourself in a place that you don’t belong. You’re there, but you know you shouldn’t be. You can’t feel comfortable. You’re just kind of wandering and waiting until

you get to leave. Do you have that place? I call it Ulta. Alright? I can get in on most places, I can find my way, and I can... Ulta, I have no where to go.

But what Jesus is saying is that the world is spinning in this direction. And it's moving this way, "But I have called you out of it. So, you're no longer going that way." And the world hates that because you no longer belong to it.

Which means you no longer are motivated by the same things as the world. You no longer fear the same things as the world. You no longer have the same agenda as the world. And the world hates that because the world hates things that it can't control.

And Jesus says, "I want you to know that if I kept you where you were there is a chance that you would be loved, artificially, by this world. But, I'm calling you out. I'm going to let you experience a way of life and love, but it's also going to come with this other side where you will be hated."

What He wants us to see is that we no longer belong to the world. But He doesn't leave us with that. If you've placed your faith in Jesus, you belong to Jesus—fully.

We've been talking about this in this series. To belong to Jesus means He's the vine we are the branch. We are connected to Him. We get everything from Him.

You belong to Jesus.

And let's just do the math on this. If we fully belong to Jesus, that means that we can't fully belong to anything else. We can't fully belong to a political party. We can't fully belong to a career. We no longer fully belong to our own family.

Jesus says, "You fully belong to Me." I want us to experience that. I want us to sit in that. Because a lot of times, even after we start following Jesus, we kind of want the best of both worlds.

We want to still hold on to our old way of life and get this new church thing and Jesus. Can't we put it all together? But it never works, does it?

We try to get the best of both worlds but we end up getting the worst of both worlds, because we can't live like we once did because we have this conviction now, so it's not as much fun.

And then we come to church and we really haven't given ourselves completely to God, so we leave here not feeling like it's enough either, "So, I'm kind in between these two worlds where I'm trying to keep one foot in each."

And it's kind of like we're living in the splits. It just keeps moving us. I'm not going to do the splits right now, because I'm not up here to show boat. Okay? But I could.

It feels like this tension on us. We want one foot over here and one foot over there. What happens is sin isn't as much fun and church isn't as good.

What Jesus is saying is, “I want you to embrace the fact that you belong to Me.” Here’s the thing. Once you embrace that and you stop living in between and you fully give yourself to God, and you get to know how much He loves you and the life and the purpose that He has for you and you start living that way, you face even more hatred and more rejection.

But, there is also something beautiful that happens in that process. Church stops being optional. The family of God stops being this extended family reunion that I go to sometimes. It becomes the people on this whole earth where I know I have a space where I belong.

I experience so much hatred and persecution and people going against me, but I know, not just on Sundays, that I have people in my life who surround me and encourage me and I have a place where I belong.

You belong to Jesus—all of you.

And if you’re looking for a spot here at Traders Point to say, “I want to belong. Where do I start?” We want to point you to Rooted.

Rooted is a 10-week group experience designed to connect you to God, the church, and your purpose.

You can go to this link behind me to get registered today. Here’s what it is. It’s 10-weeks of you getting in community with other people to sit down and talk about, “What does it mean to fully give myself to God? What does it look like to live on mission and in community?”

I tell you, I can’t recommend it enough. Get registered at tpcc.org/rooted.

What Jesus is going to do now is He is going to make the same point again to make it make sense to us. Because there is probably this spot right now where you are, if you’re anything like me, a people pleaser who loves doing it right, who doesn’t want to offend people, who wants to keep everything good. You’re like, “Is there another option where I don’t have to be hated? I think I can do this in a way that I don’t have to be hated.”

Look at what Jesus says right here. He says:

“Do you remember what I told you? ‘A slave is not greater than the master.’ Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you. They will do all this to you because of me, for they have rejected the one who sent me.” John 15:20-21 (NLT)

Now, before we talk about what’s here, I know that there are words here that because where we are where we are in our context, when we see words like, slaves and masters, it begins to put thoughts in our head like, “What is this saying? Did Jesus have slaves? What is this?”



It's important to see that Rabbi, teacher—another word for Rabbi is master. So this relationship that He has with His students, His disciples, would have been in that same way. He is the master. He's the Rabbi.

And these guys voluntarily gave up everything to follow Him. They watched Him every single day. They learned to talk like He talked. They learned to act like He acted. They responded in every single way. Their whole goal was to imitate Him, their Master.

So, what He is saying here is, "I just want you to play it out. Think about this. If your goal is to imitate Me, and you're going to try to continue being like Me if I were here, then you need to know that the world is going to imitate itself as well. And if it hated Me, it is going to hate you."

Persecute: to harass or annoy

And the word persecute. A lot of times we make that word pretty small. When we talk about persecution we think about someone who is either being arrested or even killed. But persecute is a really big word. Its basic definition just means to harass or to annoy, to be mocked or for someone to show disdain or hatred toward you.

So, Jesus says, "Hey, just think about it. I did this. I went through this. They hated Me. I just want you to be prepared. When you step into this space and you bear My image, You're going to be hated."

Look at what He says. He's going to continue moving in this direction:

"Anyone who hates me also hates my Father. If I hadn't done such miraculous signs among them that no one else could do, they would not be guilty. But as it is, they have seen everything I did, yet they still hate me and my Father." John 15:23-24 (NLT)

This is what Jesus is saying. For those of us who are wiggling like, "I don't know. I think I can do this without being hated," Jesus is saying, "I was perfect. I was sinless. I came and I loved these people. I healed these people. I served. I gave them food. I did the miraculous. And they still hated Me."

Jesus knew. Jesus knew this life-changing Good News that He came to bring was not going to be good news for everyone. There were going to be people who stepped up and hated Him. But He was okay with that because He knew it was worth it to get His message across. It has to be worth it if we're going to live in a world that we know it's going to tell us that it hates us.

You know, I haven't experienced this personally yet, but if 90 percent of sitcoms have taught me anything it's that this day is coming. One day my kids are going to tell me that they hate me. Right? I mean, if Carl Winslow, Uncle Phil, Danny Tanner—if all of these guys were hated, my time is coming. Right?

But what I can imagine is that the only thing that gives you strength to know that the people you love most are hating you in this moment, is that you really believe what you are doing is right. And it's hard but it's possible.

Jesus is like, "I want you to have that kind of confidence. Be ready. Hatred is coming. And there is no way that you can avoid it."

Look at how He closes this in verse 25. Look at what He says. He says that when I did all of this:

"This fulfills what is written in their Scriptures: 'They hated me without cause.'" John 15:25 (NLT)

There was no reason, other than that they rejected what He would come in to bring. Even if it was the best, they couldn't see a world where His kingdom fit into their world. So, they rejected Him. They despised Him. They hated Him.

This is a theme that, once you see it, you also see that it shows up over and over and over again in Scripture in red letters. It's not just here in this moment, but inarguably, it's in one of Jesus' most famous teachings, the Sermon on the Mount.

He actually gives a special blessing for those who are going to be hated. Basically, He's saying, "Hey, the good life looks very different than you think it does. And here's actually a marker to know that you are moving in the right direction. You will be hated."

Take a look at this in Matthew, chapter 5. He says:

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Matthew 5:11-12 (NIV)

Now, He says, "Blessed are those who are hated." But He also put a qualifier in it. Did you see that? He said, "If you are hated for My sake. If you're hated because you're sharing My gospel. If you're hated because you're living like I told you to live."

So, here's a question that I want to ask you today.

Am I being hated because of me or because of Jesus?

There are some of us who are hated right now. And it has nothing to do with Jesus. You are being hated because you are a jerk. There's no Jesus. It's you. You are a jerk. You're abrasive. You're hateful. You are sowing seeds of hatred and you are reaping those seeds of hatred.

This is a big deal. We want to do everything we can to remove as much of us from the equation as possible. Jesus brings enough hatred on His own. We don't need to add anything to it. That's central to our mission as a church.

We exist to remove unnecessary barriers that keep people from Jesus.

I love the way that Pastor Aaron talks about this. It's unnecessary barriers that we want to remove. Because there are necessary barriers. When you just throw up the gospel, when you talk about God, there are natural, real barriers that are there.

There are barriers because of who Jesus is and who He says that He is that will bring hatred. We are okay with those barriers.

But there are unnecessary barriers that we want to do everything that we can to remove. Right? Some of them are simple. An unnecessary barrier like smells. You don't know how hard we work, as a church, to make this place smell good.

Thousands of you show up. And thousands of you leave. And we work so hard so that this place doesn't smell like an armpit when the next group comes in, because that's a big deal. You don't want people walking in like I would love to hear about Jesus but I don't think I can stay. So, there are little things that we do.

There are bigger things of removing unnecessary barriers like false teaching, like legalism, or moralism—this idea that, "I think that I have to be really good in order for God to save me." We want to dismantle those false teachings: Unnecessary barriers.

But there are also unnecessary barriers that are in me. There are unnecessary barriers that I need to be cleansed of, to be healed from so that God can use me to tell more people about who He is.

Our call to holiness, to be made into the image of Jesus, is not just so that we can connect better with God. It's so that we can connect better with one another and be more useful in the mission of God. To be able to share the life-changing gospel we want to remove as much from us from the equation as possible. We want to be windows, not walls.

I want to be able to stand in front of someone and they look right through me and all they can see is Jesus. I don't want to be a wall that people have to go around to get to Jesus.

Is there anything about me that is making it hard for people to see Jesus?

That's the question that we need to be asking. Is there anything in me, any bias, any undealt sin—is there anything inside me that is stopping people from being able to see Jesus? I want to cut it out. I want to ask for God... I want to remove it so that it is more and more Jesus and less and less of me until it is Him alone.

And I know there is another camp. Maybe you're saying, "I hear you. I hear you. But, if I'm being honest, I must be like blessed and highly favored because I can't think of being rejected, I can't think of losing anything for Jesus, I think you guys might be doing it wrong." Maybe. Probably not.

The question I would ask you is:

Do people know that you are a Christian?

If you are in this place and you are looking around at the people you know, the people you work with, the people you go to school with—do they know that you are a Christian? Do they know that Jesus is the most central thing to your life. And because of that, that dictates why you do what you do.

I'm not saying that you need to get a t-shirt that says, "Ask me about my Lord and Savior." But like I said, I would be curious if no one around you would know that you follow Jesus.

These are people who know everything about your life. They know your favorite sports team. They even know your fantasy team, which is a sermon for another day, really. They know your coffee order. How do they know that you take oat milk in your Latte, but they don't know that you took communion on Sunday?

I'm saying, there is space. And I know it's not easy. I'm not going to stand here on this stage and say, "Hey, once you start sharing your faith, things are going to get better and easier and money is just going to fall on you and relationships are going to get better."

We all know that when we insert Jesus into the equation there is a chance that this thing goes sideways. There is a chance I will lose out on that opportunity. There is a chance that I get looked past because of my faith in Jesus.

I'm not going to tell you you won't miss out on some things, but I will tell you what we just read in Matthew says that whatever you lose for His name's sake, it won't compare to the reward that is awaiting you in heaven.

I can I tell you this:

The world needs to know you are a Christian.

The world needs to know that you and I are God's plan "A" for how this gospel gets out. God has chosen me and you to go throughout the world and to continue to tell everyone about all that Jesus has done.

There is a word that He uses for me and you and we can be different in every single way. We have different gifts and abilities but anyone who follows Jesus all has this same title: we are a witness.



Look at these red letters in the book of Acts. This is what Jesus gives to His people before He ascends into heaven. He says:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my,” say it with me, “witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8 (NIV)

And you’ve got to connect this to the part that we are going to be finishing up in chapter 15. Look at what He says here:

“But I will send you the Advocate—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about me. And you must also testify about me because you have been with me from the beginning of my ministry.” John 15:26-27 (NLT)

What does a witness do? Testifies. So, the way that He is saying this is going to break down is, “I’m going to send you the Holy Spirit.”

And the Holy Spirit is going to point to Me. He’s going to tell you about Me. He’s going to remind you about Me over and over and over again. He’s going to tell you the way that He wants you to live. He’s going to tell you what He wants you to say and what I need you to do is say it.

How can people know unless you and I are on the front line telling people about this Jesus that we belong to?

I think there is a catch here that stops a lot of us. We would say, “I would love to tell my faith. I would love to be a witness. I would love to testify. I just don’t think I’m ready. I don’t know if I’m a credible witness.”

Can I just be very clear on the type of witness that Jesus is calling you to be? There are several kinds of witnesses when you think about a court room. Right?

Expert Testimony vs Eyewitness Testimony

An expert testimony is brought in to talk about something very specific. He is an expert. That is why he is brought in.

That is not what God has called you to do. You are an eyewitness. You are someone who is brought in because you have seen something that everyone else needs to hear. You don’t have all of the answers. All you know is this is who I was, I met God, my life changed. That is what I know and that is what I can speak to and that is what I can testify to.

It is what I believe to be a work of the devil to make us believe that we are not credible witnesses. We begin to live this life, “I’m just not ready yet. I’m going to tell people when I get a little bit farther down the road. When I clean myself up a little bit more, then I will be a witness. Then I will be on mission for Jesus.”

But do you know how long it is going to take you to feel like you are an expert in the ways of God? You will die before that happens. And then you'll be in the only place where God doesn't need anymore testimony. The truth is, that no matter your space, if you have placed your faith in Jesus you are in a place to share. Even better if you've got a little bit of dirt and mud and muck on you.

You can go through life and you can tell people, I'm not perfect and that's not what I'm talking about. I'm being vulnerable. I'm saying that I am saved by grace. I met a God who loves me and transformed my life. I belong to Him.

When you have that testimony, that's a relatable testimony. Someone sees you and says, "You go to church? God loves you? Then maybe God can love me too." That's the space that we want to be in, witnesses from here to the end of the earth, telling everyone everywhere about Jesus, who He is and all He has done.

Jesus is going to close here with this section that actually rolls over into chapter 16. He's going to tell us why. Why He's mentioned this over and over again that you will be hated. Here's why:

"I have told you these things so that you won't abandon your faith." John 16:1 (NLT)

I think sometimes we get caught up in why we come to church and what Jesus really wants us to have more than anything else. He didn't tell you all of these things so that you can maneuver around the storms. He didn't tell you all of these things so that you won't have to face rejection.

He's saying, "I'm telling you all of these things because I don't want you to lose the thing that is most important and that is your faith. I don't want you to make a mistake and be confused that just because the world hates you that that is any reflection on how much I love you. And I want you to go out there and I want you to live and never abandon your faith."

It's this place where we're going to go out and be hated. We're going to face persecution. But, still, at the end of the day, we're going to be able to stand, maybe with shaking knees and empty hands, and just say, "The world has hated us and rejected us and taken everything from us, but they can't take our faith."

We live by faith. We are saved by faith. Faith is the most essential thing for me and you. Have you placed your faith in Jesus?

I want to point to maybe some of the most famous red letters that this world has ever know and they are in John, chapter 3, verse 16. This is the God that you belong to.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (NIV)



Whoever believes. That's the space that I want to bring you to today. The God that you are believing in is the God who sent His only Son. A God who lived a perfect life. A life without fault, but was killed for my sake and yours.

He went to a cross where He was crucified. And what kept Him there? It was for every reason that God had to reject me and you. But He took all of that on on a cross and died for it. He took all of God's wrath.

Now the only thing left for you to receive is God's love. You can have this peace in knowing that you may be hated by the world, but you are loved by God. And that is something that you can respond to today.

When you really come to terms with it, this is a good God. He didn't love you because you were good. He loved you when you were His enemy.

Jesus willingly died for a world that wanted Him dead. This is the God that we get to stand under. This is the God that we get to tell people about.

And the courage that I want to give you today is to be able to stand and to believe this and to live like it's true, "I'm okay with being hated by the world if it means that even one person may come to know the love of God and be accepted by Him."

What I want us to do right now is we're just going to enter into a time of prayer. And I want to pray over all of you, whether this is your first time receiving this love of God, to know what it means to be accepted by God, I want to pray over you, as well as for all of us, that as we go, we will stand firm on this truth that God is with us no matter what comes. God loves us.

So, right where you are at all of our campuses, would you just close your eyes and bow your heads and pray with us?

Father, we thank You so much. God, not just for the words we want to hear, but for all of the words, all of the red letters.

God, thank You for setting us up for what is to come. Thank You, even if it is hard to hear, God, You know that it's importance for us to hear. There is no way around it. We will be hated.

But, God, we know that hate can never compete with love. God, we know that we may be hated by the world, but we are loved by You.

So, God, I pray that You give us the courage to fully embrace the fact that we belong to you and no one else. God, we will gladly accept the consequences of that.

God, help us to not straddle between both worlds thinking we can belong in both. God, we just want to belong to you. We want to confess our allegiance to you.



God, help us to imitate You. Help us to hold on to our faith and not to abandon it when it gets really hard. Help us to share and to be witnesses of all that You have done and all that You want to do.

Father, I pray right now for everyone at all of our campuses who want to place their faith in You. God, I pray that this is the day that they come forward and that they receive this blessing, this gift that it is to know You and be in relationship with You. To die to themselves but to be resurrected in new life. God, I pray that there is nothing that stops anyone from receiving that today.

Father, it is Your perfect and holy name we pray: Amen.

